

VISION IMPAIRMENTS

LOW VISION

DESCRIPTION:

- Reduced vision that cannot be fully corrected with glasses or contact lenses.
- Children may have difficulty recognising faces, tracking fast-moving objects, or seeing long distances.

GAELIC GAMES COACHING TIPS:

- ✓ **Use high-contrast equipment** – bright, neon footballs or sliotars.
- ✓ **Mark out pitches with bold colours or tactile markers** (cones, floor tape).
- ✓ **Keep drills close-range** – shorter passes, smaller pitches.
- ✓ **Allow extra time to track the ball** – slow down drills or use underarm passes first.
- ✓ **Give verbal cues** – “Ball coming to you, John!”
- ✓ **Buddy system** – a peer can guide positioning and movement.

CORTICAL VISUAL IMPAIRMENT (CVI)

DESCRIPTION:

- Brain-based visual processing difficulty; vision may fluctuate depending on fatigue, lighting, or distractions.

GAELIC GAMES COACHING TIPS:

- ✓ **Reduce visual clutter** – use clear, simple backgrounds; avoid busy training areas.
- ✓ **Present one skill at a time** – fewer distractions help processing.
- ✓ **Consistent lighting** – avoid glare or shadows.
- ✓ **Repetition & routine** – the same drill sequence each week builds confidence.
- ✓ **Use touch & sound cues** – allow them to feel the sliotar or listen for a coach’s clap before a pass.

ALBINISM

(ASSOCIATED WITH VISUAL
IMPAIRMENT & LIGHT SENSITIVITY)

DESCRIPTION:

- Children may have reduced vision, nystagmus (eye movement), and high sensitivity to sunlight.

GAELIC GAMES COACHING TIPS:

- ✓ **Shade** - Schedule training in shaded areas when possible.
- ✓ **Suggest or Provide sun protection** – hats, sunglasses, sun cream
- ✓ **Equipment** - Use larger, high-contrast balls for easier tracking.
- ✓ **Positioning** - Allow positioning in shaded or low-glare areas on the pitch.

VISION IMPAIRMENTS

RETINOPATHY OF PREMATURITY (ROP)

DESCRIPTION:

- Vision loss caused by abnormal blood vessel growth in premature infants.
- Can range from mild low vision to severe vision impairment.

GAELIC GAMES COACHING TIPS:

- ✓ **Adapt the size of the playing area** – smaller spaces make it easier to track movement.
- ✓ **Verbal orientation cues** – “You’re on the left wing now.”
- ✓ **Soft, audible balls** (bells inside or rattling sliotars, if available) can help tracking.
- ✓ **Allow closer positioning to coaches during instruction.**

CONGENITAL BLINDNESS/SEVERE VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

DESCRIPTION:

- Little or no functional vision; may rely on touch, hearing, or assistive technology.

GAELIC GAMES COACHING TIPS:

- ✓ **Use audible balls** – balls with bells or noise-making sliotars.
- ✓ **Playing area** – use large cones/poles to clearly mark out the playing area.
- ✓ **Guided movement** – buddy or SNA gently guides running or positioning.
- ✓ **Focus on adapted skills** – striking stationary balls, hand-passing guided by touch.
- ✓ **Celebrate participation over competition** – skill stations rather than full games.

GENERAL INCLUSIVE STRATEGIES FOR VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

- **Communication is key** – always introduce yourself verbally and explain what you’re doing.
- **Be descriptive** – narrate play (“The ball is coming from your right!”).
- **High-contrast & audible equipment** – neon footballs, bells in sliotars, brightly coloured bibs.
- **Buddy systems & peer mentoring** – essential for orientation and social inclusion.
- **Simplify & repeat drills** – repetition helps build muscle memory.
- **Encourage safe exploration** – let children feel the ball, hurley, or pitch boundaries first.
- **Positive reinforcement** – high-fives, team cheers, and clear praise.